

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace the previous version, and the listing of the claims:

LISTING OF CLAIMS

* → 1. (currently amended) An automatic document feeder for feeding an original, comprising:

a reading portion having a reading position for reading the original;

a transparent film member as guide means disposed above the reading portion to form a curved original reading path;

a platen roller for transporting the original at the reading portion, said platen roller being arranged to press the guide means to transport the original between the guide means and the platen roller and positioned upstream relative to the reading position to thereby prevent scratching of the guide means at the reading position when the platen roller directly contacts the guide means;

~~guide means arranged relative to the platen roller to form a curved original reading path together with the platen roller,~~

~~with~~ ^{by} regulating means projecting from a frame ^{of the automatic document feeder} ~~for forming a space~~ ^{at a predetermined distance to the platen roller in a direction away from the platen roller with respect to the guide means; and}

pressing means for pressing the guide means to the platen roller so that the original moves the guide means toward a side opposite to the platen roller when the original enters between the platen roller and the guide means.

* — ② (original) An automatic document feeder according to claim 1, further comprising a platen at which the reading portion is disposed, said guide means being located between the platen and the platen roller, and said regulating means ~~forming the~~ ^{contacting the platen to form a} space between the platen roller and the platen.

3. (previously presented) An automatic document feeder according to claim 1, wherein said platen roller is disposed at a position away from the reading position in the original reading path.

4. (cancelled)

5. (currently amended) An automatic document feeder according to claim 4 1, further comprising first transport means disposed ~~at the upstream side~~ relative to the platen roller ~~in the direction that the platen roller transports the original~~ for transferring the original to the reading position, said platen roller being disposed between the first transport means and the reading position.

6. (original) An automatic document feeder according to claim 5, further comprising second transport means for transferring the original transported by the platen roller from the reading position.

7. (currently amended) An automatic document feeder according to claim 1, wherein said ~~guide means is formed in a flexible transparent film member~~ is flexible.

* → 8. (currently amended) An automatic document feeder according to claim 1, further comprising a guide member disposed adjacent to the platen roller ~~to be movable freely~~ for pressing the original against the guide means at the reading position.

9. (original) An automatic document feeder according to claim 7, wherein said pressing means comprises a fastening member for fastening one end of the transparent film member, and supporting means for bending and supporting the transparent film member so

that the transparent film member is elastically pressed against the platen roller.

10. (currently amended) An automatic document feeder according to claim 7, wherein said pressing means ~~comprise~~ comprises a fastening member for fastening one end of the transparent film member, and tension application means for applying tension to the transparent film member to press against the platen roller.

11. (original) An automatic document feeder according to claim 2, wherein said platen roller is supported at a predetermined position above the platen.

12. (currently amended) An automatic document feeder for feeding an original, comprising:

a reading portion having a reading position for reading the original;

a flexible transparent film member as guide means disposed above the reading portion to form a curved original reading path;

a platen roller disposed at a position away from the reading position ~~in~~ relative to a predetermined direction and transporting the original at the reading position in the predetermined direction, said platen roller being arranged to press the guide means to transport the original between the guide means and the platen roller and positioned upstream relative to the reading position to thereby prevent scratching of the guide means at the reading position when the platen roller directly contact the guide means;
and

~~transparent flexible guide means arranged relative to the platen roller to form a curved original reading path together with the platen roller, and~~

pressing means for pressing the transparent flexible guide means against the platen roller.

13. (cancelled)

14. (currently amended) An automatic document feeder for feeding an original, comprising:

a reading portion having a reading position for reading the original;

a platen at which the reading portion is disposed;

transport means for transferring the original to the reading position of the reading portion;

backup guide means arranged along a direction that the transport means transports the original to face the platen;

guide means arranged between the platen and the backup guide means and situated adjacent to the backup guide means to form an original reading path together with the backup guide means;

regulating means projecting from a frame for forming a space having a predetermined distance ~~outside the guide means at a side opposite to the backup guide means~~ between the backup guide means and the platen; and

pressing means for pressing the guide means against the backup guide means so that the original moves the guide means toward ~~the~~ a side opposite to the guide means when the original enters between the backup guide means and the guide means. ^{a guide surface of}

15. (cancelled)

16. (new) An automatic document feeder according to claim 9, wherein said supporting means includes a transfer guide and a discharge guide integrally connected together to form a space

therebetween, said transparent film member being arranged between the transfer guide and the discharge guide.

17. (new) An automatic document feeder according to claim 16, wherein said platen roller is located adjacent to the transfer guide in the space between the transfer guide and the discharge guide.

18. (new) An automatic document feeder according to claim 1, wherein said frame supports the platen roller and the guide means.

19. (new) An automatic document feeder according to claim 14, wherein said frame supports the transport means, backup guide means, and the guide means.